

What is a novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronavirus that commonly circulates among humans and cause mild illness like the common cold.

What is COVID-19

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person that was first identified in Wuhan, China.

How does COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 spreads from person to person. The virus is thought to spread between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may also be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes; however, this is not the main way the virus is thought to spread.

Who is most at risk for catching COVID-19?

Much like the flu, individuals with compromised immune systems are at a higher risk for catching COVID-19, including the elderly and those with serious medical conditions.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have mild to severe respiratory illness symptoms including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Body aches and pains

How can you prevent catching COVID-19?

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds or more
- If soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Stay home if you are sick
- Avoid contact with people who are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and then discard the tissue
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe
- Avoid large gatherings

Should I wear a facemask?

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well use a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.

What should I do if I have been exposed to COVID-19?

People who think they may have been exposed to COVID-19 should contact their health provider immediately. Do not come to the hospital unless advised by your primary healthcare provider. However, if you're experiencing a healthcare emergency, call 911.

What if I don't have a primary healthcare provider?

If you don't have a primary healthcare provider, call the New Jersey Department of Health hotline at 1-800-222-1222 or you can schedule a virtual visit with a doctor through the RWJBarnabas Health telemedicine App. For further information and details visit [rwjbh.org/telemed](https://www.rwjbh.org/telemed)

How long is the incubation period?

Symptoms of COVID-19 can appear 2-14 days after exposure.

What should I do if I am exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19?

If you feel sick with a fever, cough or difficulty breathing and have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19, or if you live in or have recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19, you should call your primary healthcare provider. Your primary healthcare provider will work with the state's public health department and CDC to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

Where can I get tested for COVID-19?

If believe you may have come in contact with someone with COVID-19 or are exhibiting mild symptoms and want to be tested for the virus, please speak with your primary healthcare provider. Your doctor will determine your need for testing and your treatment options depending on the severity of the situation.

Can I come to an RWJBarnabas Health hospital for testing?

Do not go to your nearest emergency room or urgent care center seeking testing. Call your primary healthcare provider first to assess the situation, unless you are having a true medical emergency.

What if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive for COVID-19, you should stay home and avoid contact with others to avoid further spread of the virus.

How is COVID-19 treated?

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 should receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms. For severe cases, treatment should include care to support vital organ functions.

Is there a vaccine for COVID-19?

Currently there are no vaccines available to prevent COVID-19 infections.

What are the dangers of contracting COVID-19?

Approximately 80% of those infected with COVID-19 will only experience mild symptoms and not require hospitalization. In extreme cases, individuals have experienced pneumonia, multi-organ failure and death.

What is RWJBarnabas Health doing to ensure the health and safety of the communities it serves?

RWJBarnabas Health is continuing to work in close contact with the New Jersey Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control to obtain the latest statistics and details. We are taking all necessary precautions to protect our patients and staff.

For additional information and rolling updates on COVID-19 please refer to:

The NJ Department of Health or via hotline-800-222-1222
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention